# MSNE 501- Graduate Student Seminar

**Contact Instructor Information**

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**Course Identification**

Meeting times: 1 hour per week 4:00-5:00 Wednesday
Location: TBD

Required course for MSNE PhD students. Masters, professional masters, visiting scholars, and postdocs are welcome to attend and, provided availability, present. Undergraduates looking to learn about research experiences are also welcome.

**Course Description**

Each week, three first-year graduate students or two graduate students with two or more years will give a presentation. For each presentation, the students not giving a presentation will be encouraged to fill out peer evaluation forms (see below) that include anonymous comments/suggestions for improving the presentation. The results of these comments will not be shared, but given to the presenter for their reference. Student evaluations will address such items as the quality and clarity of the slides, the presenters' communication skills, the presenters' technical skills and how they answer questions, and the novelty/interest/impact of the research. Presentations can be on a students' research or, in the case of first-year students, on a paper related to the research they plan to do. Repeatable for credit.

**Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

This seminar aims to unite the MSNE graduate students on a weekly basis in order to:

- Provide a low-stress forum for practice for conferences, for thesis defenses/qualifiers, and for improvement of presentational skills
- Provide students with constructive criticism on presentations, both by non-experts and experts in their field of interest
- Increase collaborative efforts across all lab groups and generate awareness of the research efforts within MSNE
- Provide a forum to discuss similar research and share results to avoid unnecessary duplication of research
- Foster increased awareness and unity among all graduate students in the department

**Required Texts and Materials**

None for this course

**Exams and Papers**

None for this course

**Grade Policies**
The seminar will be graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Students will be required to attend **9** seminars (out of a total of 13) per semester and give one oral presentation per year to pass. The final grade for a semester where a student does not present will be based on attendance; the grade for the semester when a student gives a presentation will be determined based on both attendance and the presentation.

**Presentation Guidelines**
In accordance with the course objectives, the topic of the presentation should be an individual's research project. Similar to what would normally be included in a conference, candidacy or thesis defense presentation. Presentations must be more than 10 minutes, but no more than 30 minutes, including time for questions (or no more than 20 minutes for weeks where three students are presenting). Less senior students who have not yet amassed enough material for a 10-minute presentation may consider presenting the following:

- Project Proposal for a fellowship application, etc.
- Research previous perform/published by their group
- Relevant journal articles- similar to a journal club presentation

**Presentation Scheduling**
Students will be able to sign up for their preferred presentation date on a first-come first-serve basis according to the general guideline below:

- 1st half Fall semester- 3+ years
- 2nd half Fall semester - 2nd years
- 1st half Spring semester – 3+ years (who did not present in the fall)
- 2nd half Spring semester - 1st years

Students who have not signed up by the deadline will be randomly assigned to a date. Once the dates have been finalized, changes will only be made if approved by the instructor.

**Absence Policies**
Students must attend 9 out of 13 seminars per semester, as outlined in the grade policies section.

**Rice Honor Code**
Please ensure that any work presented that is not original is properly cited.

**Disability Support Services**
Any student with a disability requiring accommodations in this class is encouraged to contact the instructor. Additionally, students should contact the coordinator for Disabled Student Services in Allen Center.

**Syllabus Change Policy**
Information contained in this course syllabus, other than the absence policies, may be subject to change with reasonable advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

# Oral Presentation

Name: Date:

Select the big box which most describes student performance. Alternatively you can "split the indicators" by using the check boxes before each indicator to evaluate each item individually.

| | **Exceeds Standard**<br>4 | **Meets Standard**<br>3 | **Nearly Meets Standard**<br>2 | **Does Not Meet Standard**<br>1 | **Score (Optional)** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Language Use and Delivery**<br>The student communicates ideas effectively | ☐ Effectively uses eye contact<br>☐ Speaks clearly, effectively and confidently using suitable volume and pace<br>☐ Fully engages the audience<br>☐ Dresses appropriately<br>☐ Selects rich and varied words for context and uses correct grammar | ☐ Maintains eye contact<br>☐ Speaks clearly and uses suitable volume and pace<br>☐ Takes steps to engage the audience<br>☐ Dresses appropriately<br>☐ Selects works appropriate for context and uses correct grammar | ☐ Some eye contact, but not maintained<br>☐ Speaks clearly and unclearly in different portions<br>☐ Occasionally engages the audience<br>☐ Dresses inappropriately<br>☐ Selects words inappropriate for context; uses incorrect grammar | ☐ Uses eye contact ineffectively<br>☐ Fails to speak clearly and audibly and uses unsuitable pace<br>☐ Does not engage the audience<br>☐ Dresses inappropriately<br>☐ Selects words inappropriate for context; uses incorrect grammar | |
| **Organization and Preparation**<br>The student exhibits logical organization | ☐ Introduces the topic clearly and creatively<br>☐ Maintains clear focus on the topic<br>☐ Effectively includes smooth transitions to connect key points<br>☐ Ends with logical, effective and relevant conclusion | ☐ Introduces the topic clearly<br>☐ Maintains focus on the topic<br>☐ Includes transitions to connect key points<br>☐ Ends with coherent conclusion based on evidence | ☐ Introduces the topic<br>☐ Somewhat maintains focus on the topic<br>☐ Includes some transitions to connect key points<br>☐ Ends with a conclusion based on evidence | ☐ Does not clearly introduce the topic<br>☐ Does not establish or maintain focus on the topic<br>☐ Uses ineffective transitions that rarely connect points<br>☐ Ends without a conclusion | |
| **Content**<br>The student explains the process and findings of the project and the resulting learning | ☐ Clearly defines the topic or thesis and its significance<br>☐ Supports the thesis and key findings with an analysis of relevant and accurate evidence<br>☐ Provides evidence of extensive and valid research with multiple and varied sources<br>☐ Provides evidence of complex problem solving and learning stretch<br>☐ Combines and evaluates existing ideas to form new insights | ☐ Clearly defines the topic of thesis<br>☐ Supports the thesis and key findings with evidence<br>☐ Presents evidence of valid research with multiple sources<br>☐ Provides evidence of problem solving and learning stretch<br>☐ Combines existing ideas to form new insights | ☐ Defines the topic or thesis<br>☐ Supports the thesis with evidence<br>☐ Presents evidence of research with sources<br>☐ Provides some evidence of problem solving and learning stretch<br>☐ Combines existing ideas | ☐ Does not clearly define the topic or thesis<br>☐ Does not support the thesis with evidence<br>☐ Presents little or no evidence of valid research<br>☐ Shows little evidence of problem solving and learning stretch<br>☐ Shows little evidence of the combination of ideas | |
| **Questions and Answers** | Demonstrates extensive knowledge of the topic by responding confidently, precisely and appropriately to all audience questions and feedback | Demonstrates knowledge of the topic by responding accurately and appropriately to questions and feedback | Demonstrates some knowledge of the topic by responding accurately and appropriately to questions and feedback | Demonstrates incomplete knowledge of the topic by responding inaccurately and inappropriately to questions and feedback. Left no time for Q&A | |